

CHAPTER SEVEN

Iran's Policies during the Second World War

FOREIGN RELATIONS

GERMANY could not have been so successful in her policies if Iran had not responded to her advances. Hence, it was not surprising that Iran decided to remain neutral when the second World War broke out. Such a policy was beneficial to both Germany and Iran, because it permitted them to continue and even to increase their mutual trade. An outright alliance between the two countries would have presented unnecessary inconveniences to both of them. Iran might have become a theater of hostilities because of possible British action, and consequently Germany would have lost a valuable source of supplies. Outwardly Iran observed neutrality faithfully. Her press published war communiques of German, French, and British agencies without discrimination as well as the communiques of Tass, the Russian news agency. At the same time German goods, tourists, and technicians poured into Iran in even greater numbers.

The German invasion of Russia in June, 1941, suddenly changed the whole situation. The British government ranged itself on the side of Russia and declared its readiness to assist her in every possible

way. In order to deliver war supplies to her Russian ally on a large scale Britain had to send them in transit through Iran. But the presence of a large German fifth column in that country might have prevented any such plan from succeeding. Accordingly, on July 19 and August 16 the Soviet and British diplomatic missions in Teheran presented to the Iranian government memoranda demanding the